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VOLUME 11

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TORONTO CANADA

Canadian POETRY MAGAZINE

VOL. 11, NO. 3 MARCH, 1948

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BRITISH POETRY NUMBER
GUEST EDITOR: Howard Sergeant

BRITISH POETRY TODAY

Howard Sergeant

It gives me very great pleasure to act as guest-editor of the British number of the *Canadian Poetry Magazine* and to co-operate with Dr. Birney in attempting to establish a closer cultural relationship between Canada and the British Isles. There can be no doubt that the poets on either side of the Atlantic have much to learn from each other—and a careful study of modern world poetry has convinced me that the work of leading Canadian poets is amongst the most virile being written to-day.

Quite apart from our needs as poets, however, I believe that mutual understanding and goodwill between nations is the only solution to the international problems which concern us all—"That peace based exclusively upon political and economic arrangements of governments would not be a peace which could secure the unanimous, lasting and sincere support of the peoples of the world, and that peace must therefore be founded, if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral

solidarity of mankind." (from the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO). As poets, we cannot afford to leave it to the politicians; we must lead the way. I sincerely hope that our exchange editorship will initiate a much wider exchange of ideas between our respective countries.

In the limited space at my disposal it is impossible to make any comprehensive survey of the whole field of poetry recently published in the British Isles, so I will attempt no more than to give some indication of the predominant trends. At the same time, I must stress the danger of considering poets in groups or schools rather than as individuals, for, ultimately, it is as individuals that their work will either stand or fall.

As might be expected, the war years stimulated a remarkable interest in the arts, and particularly in music and poetry. A considerable number of new writers discovered in poetry a vital form of expression and their work was published in the mushroom magazines, folios and broadsheets which appeared for the first time—and, owing to the paper shortage or financial difficulties, usually disappeared after one or two issues. It soon became obvious who were the real poets (and many of them had commenced writing before the outbreak of hostilities).

Two distinct groups emerged: the Personalists (via the Apocalyptics), led by Henry Treece, J. F. Hendry and G. S. Fraser, with their insistence upon organic myth and with Herbert Read as their patron saint; and the Christian group of Norman Nicholson, Kathleen Raine and Anne Ridler, looking towards T. S. Eliot as their spiritual guide. Outside these movements, but often in sympathy with one or the other, were the anarchists Alex Comfort and George Woodcock; the individualist D. S. Savage; the romantics John Heath-Stubbs and Vernon Watkins; the social-realists John Atkins, Keidrych Rhys and Julian Symons; and the almost classical (in subject) Lawrence Durrell. And, of course, there was Dylan Thomas who exercised a strong influence upon the younger poets.

A great deal has been written about their preoccupation with "the single poetic theme of Life and Death," but, by their very acceptance of death, the emphasis was thrown upon life and the interpretation of those values essential to the true fulfilment of man. They were roused to a new sense of responsibility.

It was paradoxical that in an age dominated by power-politics and over-centralisation there was growing a counter-active tendency towards the development of art and poetry along regional lines. Maurice Lindsay and Robert Greacen, previously connected with the Apocalyptics, broke away to form Scottish and Irish groups, and Keidrych Rhys encouraged a similar movement in Wales. In these three circles, the trend towards a revitalized regionalism was identified with nationalism but in actual fact it was informed by the same spirit of revolt that insists upon the real freedom of the artist to develop in his own natural manner. Nowhere is this spirit more in evidence than in the six northern counties of England where the poets have been more successful in avoiding a parochial outlook. They realise, at least, that each cultural region has some contribution to make to national and international patterns of thought, belief and behaviour.

Since the end of the war British poetry has been going through a transitional stage and it is difficult to foresee exactly what direction it will take. Many young poets have not yet been able to readjust themselves. George Woodcock, D. S. Savage, Alan Rook, Francis Scarfe, J. F. Hendry and Keidrych Rhys have published very little. Julian Symons and Roy Fuller have turned to fiction and Anne Ridler to drama. To judge by their latest work, Henry Treece and Vernon Watkins seem to be aiming at greater purity and coherence, with less concentration of imagery; whilst Alex Comfort is moving towards what has been described as "social militancy." Amongst the lesser-known poets whom I think worth studying are Paul Dehn and James Kirkup, both represented in this number.

Finally, there are two very recent developments which promise well for the future of our poetry: (a) the establishment of the first Commonwealth Poetry magazine by Lionel Monteith, and (b) the changed attitude of *Poetry Review* (organ of the Poetry Society) towards modern poetry, as expressed by the new editor, Muriel Spark: "Many readers of this journal are accustomed to hearing that modern poetry is obscure, that it does not give pleasure, that it lacks form, etc. but for our integrity's sake let us take stock of our opinions, remembering that the poets who have formed our great and ancient tradition were at one time 'modern', equally frowned upon by their contemporary diehards." This is indeed a revolution.

Among the distinguished books shortly to be issued by the University of Toronto Press are **The Values of Life**, a group of essays by the late E. J. Urwick, edited by A. J. Irving; **Tess in the Theatre**, by Marguerite Roberts, which contains hitherto unpublished plays based on Hardy's novel; **Of Irony, Especially in Drama** by G. G. Sedgewick— a new edition in specially designed format of this choice volume. It will be our endeavour to present these books carefully edited, well-designed, and produced in a pleasing manner.

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THE VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Yesterday the rebels and the discontents
sailed hopefully for a guessed-at continent
beyond the improbable monsters which the map
suggested before space reached its stop.

It was easy then to move westwards
right off the map: the Quest
was always in progress; for the navigator
the uncharted dangerous island to discover.

Running away from self they dreamed
that Eldorado lay behind the gleaming
sunset ridge; that mists concealed
a commonwealth clothed all in cloth of gold.

But for us no islands, no northwest
passage to Cathay. On we press
only to discover that the final scarp
hides strangely familiar landscape.

And yet the horizon still beckons,
makes-believe to show the impossible objective;
for elsewhere is the place we would be,
homesick for a home we never knew.

Elsewhere is the place we would be:
but no smiling Auburn on its blue
remembered plain; no return
to the banished Eden of our heartburning.

Beyond the last range the timeless river
saunters in the nowhere of the heart, and every
landfall will surprise with its clear
assurance of "I have been here before."

Robin Atthill.

THE DANCERS

Where the remote waves stroke the crumbling rocks
With green and callous fingers, the gaunt hulks
Thrust out their barnacle-bedizened planks
Like bones through the moonlit mists, and fragile shells
Tinkle with every movement of the wind.

Swift to the tune of clamouring sea-birds' call,
The gull, the gannet and the cormorant,
The grey ones rise up from the rocking spume
And dance away their thousand waiting years
Between one breaker and the smoking next.

Swirling like startled leaves when winter breathes,
They sweep, pale weeping furies, down the beach,
Pausing but one brief instant, as they stoop
Beside the pool to put on fur again;
They cast no shadows in the morning sun.

Henry Treece.

ODE
(*For All Souls' Night*)

Our father Vergil by the unrippled flood,
Beneath a different sky and sun than ours,
With brooding bloodless face seated apart,
The immortal garland tight across his brow,
Remembers still the swarming of the bees –
How through the meadows fled Eurydice,
With unsuspecting feet,
Where lurked the snake, the lying shade of death;

And how the singer crossed that stream, and strode
With coursing blood unbashful through these bowers
Where the pale people clutch their hollow hearts,
And fields where only dead white blossoms grow,
To melt with music the stern gods, and seize
A willing captive from Persephone,
Yet turned, at last, to greet,
Only her ghost, the lying shade of death.

Beyond these waters echoes has he heard
Of cities sacked, and crash of falling towers?
What rumours of our warfare and our hate?
O holy poet, might we call you now,
Apollo's potency twined in your bays,
To our sick world—as when the Lord of Day
Rises in golden state,
Dispersing night, the lying shade of death!

Obscene Erictho's lore, that once had made
The sacred dead her drudging errand-goers—
Even this eludes our skill, and every art
To tell what airs of prophecy may blow
From fields which lie beyond the myrtle trees;
And evermore the mighty ghost must stay,
Closed by the ivory gate,
A wavering voice, the lying shade of death.

John Heath-Stubbs.

JOSHUA

Moses was the lucky one, dying
With the vision still intact: The Land lying
Easy as a woman, birds like angels flying
Over the ripened corn.

I was the man to carry out the contract,
Charged with the crude necessity to act
That fathers on the dream the changeling fact
That no new world is born,

The old has merely changed its scenery. When
The trumpet sounds and the wall falls, ah then
The City of God becomes a town of men
Requiring administration,

Discipline; and the people are
Not happier after all when no boon star
Rains manna, Adam's Curse and war
Being still their portion.

So, when the milk and honey refuse to flow
Except by the old device—What profit now?
They wail, Why did we listen to you?
Why did we ever cross Jordan?

True, I had my hour—the very heavens obeyed me
Once, yet that glory even has hardly paid me
For all the trouble since we passed the Red Sea.
Power is a burden

I weary of, subduing these heathen tribes,
My people lusting always for Baalish bribes
Of women, shekels, Babylonish robes—
Things are never what they seem.

That was the Land of Promise Moses spied
Through rose-tinted binoculars. I abide
In a different country, thinking: Better have died
On Pisgah with the dream.

Francis Newbold.

THE WINGLESS VICTORY

I have heard them singing in the streets again.
The long ship follows where no water leads
forgetting the hard collar, the slaves are singing
and all the portholes trail their oars of light
the oars hang in the darkness without labour
the officers exchange songs and regards
and like drowned children long weeds follow the keel

it is as if we had walked a thousand miles
the bloody journey of history, trodden in sleep
over an unseen road of living faces
and all those fingers still like lightless flames
furrow the dark to find their killers out

I do not know this country.

I have known friends, but scattered in the dark
sunken in this bay, the drowned and jettisoned men
have set these foul buffoons in their high chairs,
it has been done again. These winners are
not worth a single hand that knew a trade

There is one freedom only—
to take the hands of men called enemies
and you and they walking together go
to seek out every throat that told you to Kill

There is one freedom only
to teach your children, so that they will take
every man's hand, and put their heel
on every mouth that speaks Obey
there is one freedom only
to live as a man, among men.

Alex Comfort.

GRASS OF PARNASSUS

The lake is restless as a lover; black,
Green and sheened like oil.
Wet bracken kindles slowly and the brown, charred hills
Hang from the sky like canvas, swaying through the mist.
The water fidgets in the sedge, the bog
Asphodel is rose-hip-red and bitter,
And the landscape flows and swirls like autumn rain.

The heart is restless too:
In the blood's equinox the body rocks,
And a gale blows along the limbs,
Till hands held before the face are scarcely seen.
Yet still in the nook of love the flower lies,
Brittle and metallic, white, and veined
Like the iris of an eye—
Perfect as a birth beneath the catastrophic sky.

Norman Nicholson.

THE ROOM

The candle burns but grey and the shadow is dumb
and yesterday is dim. Let no guest enter this room.
The man in the corner plays his tune and his fingers
dance in their cramp of clay. Let no stranger bring
his lamp. This room is mine.

Whilst his guitar burns sadly in the corner
the murderer hangs in my eye and the figures
prance into the shadow and the crippled girls cry
tears of snow, but there is no sorrow here,
no-one complains here, for the mirror is dumb.

The candle burns but grey and the moth flies away
there to the corner where he plays his luminous tune,
waiting for her to rise who lies still on the blind bed
with her head in a groan of birth. Let no stranger
carry her home. The watch has stopped.

Outside the heart is a drum but here the shadow
is dumb and there is no time, and none may climb
to this room, and none may take her home, who lies
on the blind bed. Let no ghost enter, let no red soul
leave, let no-one grieve for there is no sorrow here.

The candle burns but grey and the moth will never die
for the mirror will never chime, and its blood will never run.
There is no crime here, for there is no sun; there is no
sin here for there is no god. Still he plays, still he plays,
still he waits though the watch has stopped.

And the shadow is dumb. The murderer hangs in my eye
and the figures will always dance, and the cripples
will always cry, whilst he in the corner plays the same
tune, and she stays forever in a groan of birth.
Let no-one enter this room. It is mine.

Dannie Abse.

THE HILL

I remember a hill where pear trees flowered
Heavy and white at the ending of spring,
And after them the plum trees followed
So that the hill was never without its snow.
The orchards there were huddled round cottages
Beneath whose twittering thatch green wood fires burned,
And all along the avenues squealed bulging sows
To scatter far the gossiping hens and cockerel.
Old men in clogs and fusty corduroy
Sharpened their scythes with sparking stones
Or padded about the sweet, dark cider mills;
With sudded arms blue-aproned women came
To hang out new washed clothes
Upon the branches of far white trees.
And on the turf that climbed the brackened hill

The coarse-woolled sheep tugged solemnly all day
And were as free as air.
But most of all I think of one dead, cloven tree
Between whose timber—mated forks
You saw a hundred clover fields away
The great strong bow of Severn winding out to sea
And Gloucester tower foursquare and shining in the Cotswold sky.

Leonard Clark.

POEM

Where is the peace, the glittering lotus in the brain,
At the tempestuous table of earth's supper and trance?
Poor voice of Demos and the loadstone calling,

Anger of blood and the world's profane prayer;
All these I have heard and I have come again
With the mad flower of flesh, alone, alone.

O my life. Heaven-haunted sickness and song.
Who may yet build the shining city
Where man's weeping hand disturbs the sleep of stone?

Hugo Manning.

CANTATA FOR THE WAKING OF LAZARUS

There sang a fountain in a Syrian courtyard leaping
Near to the place where Lazarus, the loved of Jesus, lay,
Lazarus, four days dead, alone in shadow sleeping.
Some say that in the sepulchre where mute he lay
There on the burning rose of resurrection-day
His eyes were sleeping fixed, although his veins were cold.
They bathed his feet beside the eucalyptus tree;
They gave him simple burial, neither myrrh nor gold:
Yet did the fountain-drops cry out that he could see,

Cry out that he could feel although his hands were cold;
The fountain cried that he, in that grave shadow sleeping,
Alone could see God's face, and blind with sun were they
Who climbed the mountain slowly on the rocky way.
Now did the sun climb heaven, but one who cast a shade,
Seeing a white crowd near the tomb-mouth with much weeping,
Prayed for him with closed eyes; with love's great strength he prayed:

Lazarus dead, rise up: for you the doves obeying
The voice of light within the water's utmost crown
Change all the drops to glory. In their cloud delaying,
Pity at last the rich, consumed by their renown.
A winding-sheet has veiled the silence of love's glory,
Earth purified by love, no life not full of light;
Sleep in the sepulchre, believe that ancient story,
That ancient sun believe, on Moses' tablets raying,
Yet see these petals breaking near the source, and white
Roses on thorny stems, and white acacia swaying
Where glinting birds alight above the ringing cup.
Crumble this crust of birth to throw to ring-doves playing.
Rise through the waking Earth: Lazarus dead, rise up.
Come to me, God, who sleep, who know that holy stave
Sung when hands laid me down within the fallen tears,
Wound in a winding-sheet, a caul about my ears,
Who must endure this dark, the freshly covered grave;
The Romans drove you out, they hunted you with spears,
Yet you have pierced my flesh, have knit me, bone to bone,
Have kindled here this force, behind the sombre stone,
To wake, yet not to wake, who hear that holy stave.

Then, as the people passed, the fountain ceased from leaping,
While yet unwakened by the Son of God he slept.
By this were many gathered near the tomb-mouth with much weeping.
Then did the fountain stop. That moment, Jesus wept.

Then sang those little birds upon the very stone
Where the dead spoke for that first time and all the folk drew near;
So great a marvel had not yet on Earth been known,
For the young man came forth, and it was he they knew;
And they drew back amazed; it shook their hearts with fear
To see the young man walk. Then that white retinue
Knew that their own last resurrection had come near.

Come, O Redeemer, come; come down, and make Earth new.

Love, newly born, come down: for you the fountain playing
Leaps into light, then spills, and fills the basin's brim.
Water gives life to stone, and light renews our saying:
For you the sages wait, and listening cherubim
Support the fountain's weight around its marble base.
For you the ages wait, old prophets are not still
Around this font of birth; they strain to see your face.

For you his winding horn a Triton's lips are playing;
His crooked eyes in water watch the fountain fill.
For you the doves of light return from their far straying,
Too long away, too long, in that Italian town.
Open my eyes at last, my eyes long shut with praying,
And let me see your eyes: love, newly born, come down.

Vernon Watkins.

SHY SPRING

Spring comes with hesitant feet after the painful winter,
shy as love, shedding her flowers, still curious of the wrecking winds and the blackening frosts.

Silent she is still, unwilling to show her heart,
unfolding here a blossom, there a wrinkled leaf to the uncertain sun.

"Is it the true sun, the loving, the life-giver?" she ponders,
still withholding her treasure, still half sleeping in a dream she dare not break.

Still she is silent, still she is grave—
she would open her heart freely, spill all her bounty,
laughing into the eyes of her lover, yielding to the caress of the sun.

But he is so tardy, hesitant and withdrawn as she,
how shall there be a marriage?
Will the day ever come when he answers her silent cry?

She has shown him a few flowers, here a violet, there a frail wood-anemone—
these are the symbols of her heart, her love-tokens,
but she dare not yet spill all her treasure.

Still she wanders alone over moor and woodland,
waking the birds, drawing a caressing finger along the larch-branches—
then she hesitates, lamenting "I have been deceived too often;

too often I have yielded my treasures for the black frost to blast and shrivel them,
for the cold relentless rain to beat them to the ground.
I will hide now, I will close my heart,
I will seek safety."

Memory assaults her; she recalls a day in May when
generously she opened her heart of love,
and a harsh wind shrivelled all her blossoms,
brushing her aside with ill-timed mockery,
and she withdrew in a rain of tears, silent, her life ebbing.

But a power greater than she, greater than the sun, healed
her broken life—
only the scars throb sometimes when memory threatens—

she will spill all her treasure yet, singing as she dances
through the April woodland,
laughing as she yields at last to long-eluding love.

Dallas Kenmare.

EPISTLE BEFORE BIRTH

Dear Sir (or Madam), Though you sometimes feel
It's time you made your bow, you're warm and cosy;
As often as you please you take a meal,
And you're not sure the future is as rosy.

Your exit's dark and lonely as the grave,
And leads, maybe, outside the pale of love;
And you would rather bear those ills you have
Than fly to others that you know not of.

And so your landfall now is overdue.
Some hesitation may be well allowed,
For could you read your life's long story through,
Between the shroud-like caul and caul-like shroud.

You might prefer to hand God back his ticket
For this queer world where joy is bought with pain,
Where the successful are perverse and wicked,
And all build castles in the air, or Spain.

You might prefer, in this atomic age,
Now concrete shelters are anachronistic,
To cancel your appearance on the stage,
Since death is *à la mode,* Life atavistic.

....

But yet one thing—no, not the obstetrician—
Will lead you to embark on life's wide sea:
It's Curiosity, that great magician
Who turns our cowardice to bravery.

And he is right. What love can do, we'll do—
To smooth neuroses with massaging smile,
The wells of joy and freedom to renew,
When they dry up or the black hooves defile.

Between ourselves, in spite of Adam's fall
And all the wiles of Screwtape, year by year,
Jack, Jill and Peter are not bad at all:
Their knavish conduct always springs from fear.

Though now the newspapers are full of woes
And the world's prospects are distinctly queer,
Spring will remain and summer and the rose,
Strawberries, mushrooms, bread and wine and beer;

And you can love, be loved, and have a passion
For world-reforming. Life is not a tale
Told by an idiot; you will get your ration
Of joy and laughter—even though you fail.

The cradle's ready, your layette prepared,
Nappies, at one a coupon, in the drawer;
There's really no occasion to be scared.
The curtain's up. What are we waiting for?

Kenneth Muir.

IN THIS GRAVE SINGLENESS

In this grave singleness and purity of love
I climb the unknown stair, the harsh and beaten way
To the dragon's chine of individual love
From which we cannot run away but sing
Still in the conscious radiance of the day.

Liberated from the rock, time's bitter father,
With the driftweed floating round the headland
Caught in the broken water between the tides,
Certain only of the moon's hidden power
And the dark quiet of the caged and sensual night.

Time as morality tempts us to the last truth
We shall never know beyond the intense dream,
The reality behind the vision of all fools
In our web of wounds, the hour that is
Perfect above the dross of many years.

Wrey Gardiner.

TOO EASY: TO WRITE OF MIRACLES

Too easy: to write of miracles dreams where the famous give
mysterious utterance to silent truth;
to confuse snow with the stars,
simulate a star's fantastic wisdom.

Easy like the willow to lament,
rant in trampled roads where pools
are red with sorrowful fires, and sullen rain
drips from the willows' ornamental leaves;
or die in words and angrily turn
to pace like ghosts about the walls of war.

But difficult when, innocent and cold,
day, a bird over a hill, flies in
—resolving anguish to a strange perspective,
a scene within a marble; returning
the brilliant shower of coloured dreams to dust,
a smell of fireworks lingering by canals
on autumn evenings—difficult to write
of the real image, real hand, the heart
of day or autumn beating steadily:
to speak of human gestures, clarify
all the context of a simple phrase
—the hour, the shadow, the fire,
the loaf on bare table.

Hard, under the honest sun, to weigh
a word until it balances with love—
burden of happiness on fearful shoulders;
in the ease of daylight to discover
what measure has its music, and achieve
the unhaunted country of the final poem.

Denise Levertoff.

YOU, DREAMER

You, dreamer, who defy the approaching army
shall face their hordes and knowing them Cain's daughters
challenge the deadliest; but turn away

forgetting the duel when her penitent hair
flows round your feet; then you will walk its waters
and from this godhead you will ponder her;

but waking entombed you shall describe her with
a sprig of palm in her hand, shall break your fetters,
naming her Magdalene in the Easter of your faith.

Muriel Spark.

THE REUNION

It never moves to where I cannot follow,
but with such dark compulsion
does my shadow radiate my will
that when it lifts a hand
my own hand like a stone
is lifted; when its feet
move ceaselessly along the halting street
my echoing steps pace out their loneliness
beside their needless cruelty: and when,
with their perpetual welcome, its eyes
turn to the mystery they understand,
my own eyes burn blindly through
what would be their deliverance.

The word arrested in its throat
is mine, the name, the prayer I cannot utter.
At noon, alone, and waiting
for the touch, the greater angel at my shoulder,
for the voice, the recognition of time's other miracle
at wordless crossings in the unexpectant crowd;
or in the public gardens entertaining private guests
with double talk of universal ends; under a pointing sun
transfixing every butterfly with noon's
enormous accusation: in sudden stillness pinned,
my shadow dwindles, and my body with it.
If an arm moves, it is fastened in my side;
my life is trampled in my heart's loud dust.

But at night-fall, as I wander, seeking down
the white-marrowed macadam of spine-lit, vertical skyways,
seeking and still seeking, because I have found
and not found; the shadow lengthens, and becomes all roads.
Over the looking hills hiding the hunched sea
my hardly-moving feet with dream-quiet stride
measuring their inches by its leagues of length
to the unimaginable distances of the horizon step,
and back again. I walk with eyes all space.
If I so much as blink, it is a star. The shadowed
face and phantom form of height with arms as strong
as my desire I embrace, and gradually vanish in a grave
of light as simple as the world is long.

James Kirkup.

THREE ITALIAN LANDSCAPES

I

At the Buca Di Bacco

Over and over, tonight,
The pianist plays by the reef
In the sea-green light
Of lamp under leaf.
His fingers are fish,
Leaping
The surf of a glimmering keyboard;
And over and over the drummer is keeping
Time, with the swing and the swish
Of waves on the seaboard.

Over and over the moon,
Drifting from key to key,
Fingers an endless tune
Of light on the sea;
Whose virginal air,
Meeting
The sensuous air of the summer,
Sounds over and over to breakers beating
Time, with the whisk and the whirr
Of a lazy drummer.

II

POSITANO

Beyond the mountainside,
The stars wink like a village; and this steep
Village itself is stars, whose pin-points glow
Faint from their firmament of rock. Below,

Hanging a fathom deep,
Fishermen's lamps are lunar on the tide;
And out to sea the trail of the risen moon
Is pools of light in the wake of a skimming stone.

III

DEEP SOUTH

Summer in Italy seemed too hot for love,
With the cloudburst-hissing of cicadas
Among the oleander leaves
(Here was the one sign of rain)
And the black pennant of the dragonfly
Hovering at a reed's masthead
(Here the one sign of wind)
Under the sun, under a moon at midday
Fainter than white thumb-print
On frosty window.

Yet, as we walked, our hands touched suddenly
(This, the one sign of our loving)
And wind, rain, frost in the Calabrian heat
Were real as our love.

Paul Dehn.

THE LEAVENING AIR

Beleaguering the rocks, and the sea's black rumours
of crisis disturb these beaches. Now all we know
between us and the future are lost and gossamer
voices, ghosted by the years, retelling their slow
journeys through night; and riding on storm the raven
whose croak we had not expected to hear this season.

I hold no brief for those unfortunate ones,
saviours chosen from the womb to carry their
private calvaries, prophets without convictions
who were compelled to walk the hungry water
at floodtide and, faltering, discovered the hands
of history indifferent as lapidary winds.

Time will resolve them. Out of their lives, perhaps,
out of their pilgrimage, our children shall
inherit a relevant star sealing apocalypse;
but for us in the purlieus they merely foretell
new legends of futility. Having omitted
to proof our lintels with their proleptic blood,

we hoard against the angel's indiscriminate
fingers our eucharist, unknowing its potence,
waiting a revolution in the human heart
to release the spirit's foliage; waiting in silence
with only ourselves to wait for. Not less than theirs
our topiarian flowering, not less our failures.

For we have been satisfied with a limited
perception of beauty, too eager to renounce
the dangerously high altitudes of childhood
where dreams meant more than technicoloured romance
under mortgage to the Screen. Focus your minds
on the empty lives and faces, finger the wounds,

trace suppurating scars to the ultimate source
and question these the hallmarks of divinity.
Though here the earthquake, wind and still small voice
compete, do they identify humanity
as the leaping images of God? How narrow
the margin between men and wholeness, yet O

how wide! Now we have come to the summoning brink
from which there is no retreat and no horizon,
and already the waves are swirling about our ankles.
Standing at the sea's edge in a winter season,
wind buffeting our lives, how can we prove
to those who follow the infallibility of love;
we, who have nothing to give, bequeath to them light?
Time, it is time to liquidate death, tear loose
its tendrils from the hearts of the living and let
the leavening mountain air restore lung's purpose.
So man may learn at last an invincible story,
achieve terrible wings to weather the ocean's fury.

Howard Sergeant.

BALLAD OF THE LONELY LOVER

Lover, come climbing to my fells,
It's frozen I am with fear;
Follow your eyes' quick-turning smile
And grind your heel on the Tower.

Tread toe-light on my tears' grey track,
Sing to the screaming bird.
Traverse the bruising fallen force,
I'll build you a bridge with my words.

Don't turn back to the peopled valley
Or wish with a look for retreat;
It's lonely I am on my wind-torn fell
And awake for your singing feet.

Hope not for heaven nor heaven's home
Nor ever a sun-calm soul;
There's but the coldly-thrashing wind
And the snow in the heather-bell.

And an outcast hovers across the sky,
Frost-nailed to his grave,
Giving you nothing and thieving all,
Hungering for your love.

Scatter the screes and strip them clean
Of each earth-rooted rock.
I'm watching the clumsy coughing sheep,
The stars strapped to my back.

Ian Bancroft.

SEA BURIAL

So lies he there,
Entangled in his marvellous bright hair:
The fronds curl, blonde,
Like weed that glimmers in a summer pond,
Wayward in the blowing air:

Is far from day,
Far from night; here rocking waters play,
They mock earth's round
Of colours, light and darkness, brimming sound:
That was his cherished place and stay.

Too quietly now
He lies in legend, compaion to that prow
That will not range
Beyond the sea-bed's wonderfully slow change
Like a minute's life of leaf on bough.

A ringing tone
Water gives up, of tears, of bell and bone.
His hand is lost, in sand.
The sea is stronger than the world of land:
Man sets forth, and fails, alone.

Kenneth Gee.

IN AN ALIEN LAND

With route uncharted, we make winter journey,
The purpose hidden, and the goal unguessed.
We are displaced, and wholly dispossessed.

We may not know the comfort of beholding
With double vision of the single mind
The country we have lost, and go to find.

We have travelled very far from the safe city,
And have forgotten how or why we came.
We do not even remember the city's name.

Only there journeys with us through the darkness
Our own insistent Baptist, crying clear
In alien wilderness: the way lies here.

Muriel Grainger.

POEM

Five continents and seven seas
Come to the nostrils, ears and lips,
The world is at our fingertips
And when the sun is gone night multiplies
By every star the scope of eyes:
Our sensual life is circumscribed by these.

Or I could say, diminishing my range
I hear you, smell your sweetness, touch your skin,
But that is outside and I must come in
Over the frontier of your eyes. I wait
Without a passport passionate
As a refugee to suffer my sea-change.

I wait for your moon. I hear the hidden sea
Break on the shores of the brain, and there behind
Lies the unfathomed ocean of your mind
And the dark sea-bed of the soul where move
All the creative impulses of love
That time may choose to evolve through you and me.

I know the seas where moved the ammonite
Alive in its own time as we in ours;
Within our blood I feel the primal powers
That bring us to one bed, and we must lie
Under the sea as much as under the sky
Lit by the furthest star's immediate light.

(The world comes in at the eye: the Apple was seen,
Before its touch on the teeth, taste on the tongue
There on the bobbing bough its promise swung
In the wind, like a wedding bell it summoned Eve.
Then blossom of Abel core of Cain and the Five
Continents, the Seven Seas between)

I think of the cruel gash
  Man has made in man's side,
The burning terror of hatred
  And repression's iron glove,
Of how the unfortunate lived
  Too long and gladly died:
And I think of them not with sorrow
  But a quiet flame of love.

And the sigh of sorrow brightens
  The flame and the love spreads
And embraces even the doers
  Who knew not what they did,
Where I face the great furnace
  With its terrible clanging reds
And am strong again to pull the chain
  And lift the great lid.

For sight comes in the moment
  When the knife goes in deep,
And yours is a sharp knife,
  My darling, and pointed well;
But the sword of love is sharper than pain
  And has a wider sweep,
The child of heaven is brighter far
  Than the dark princes of hell.

And though he carries his weapons
  And though his wound be meant,
It is but the life-giving surgeon's knife
  That moulds the form again,
And brings the mind to sanity
  Although the heart be rent;
And I have had my hour of pain
  And take from the hour content.

T. W. Ramsey.

MARINE

Trouble my heart no more,
obsessed old sea—
green parrot of the past,
aged echo of youth!

Four o'clock mist,
and in the winter twilight
whose forms are these
that leave no faintest foot-print
between the sea-wall
and the pining tide?

Ghosts of regret,
pale dusk's deceptive outlines:
no flesh and blood,
these bodies holding hands—
a man and woman sauntering by the water,
seen once in those long War years
on a Northern shore.

And they were poor,
ill-dressed
with furrowed faces—
two scarecrow figures;
dummies of age and pain.
Yet, housed within life's cold
and leaking attic,
they somehow seemed
to out-maneuvre care.
And so they paced the sand's
smooth gold-spun carpet,
and laughed and talked and sang
in the sunny air.

And I,
who watched their courteous procession,
helpless,
held in the vice
of an empty passion,
went on my way
like a snowflake trapped in Spring.

Derek Stanford.

ITALY

"E il naufragar m'e dolce in questo mare"—Leopardi.
"The shipwreck in that sea is sweet to me"—
so Leopardi, hunchback by the shore, seeming
to see mirrors of love's bounty crash,
stared over bitterness shaped like a bay.
There was a wreck which loss might change to gain,
and what he saw strikes from that sea again.

The sun like money greedy for the earth
must make that shipwreck mirage a royal end;
Europe a sandy shore, with bottles smashed,
with picknickers and furious men dispersed,
has marching space for cripples to descry
the shipwreck sweeter than an argosy.

To me, also, reading his book of thorns,
shipwrecks lie sweet upon that plum-dark sea:
the dark peninsula, soft, secret as a grape,
is on its keel the bird's sad territory:
the burning past, the slipping waves, to be
thoughts of Etruscan things or a fled dynasty.

I think these cliffs of Time give access to
seas of so full a grief, there is no end.
A shipwreck points a place, a finger rings
out of a waste, and that is sweet to me.
And sweet's a word which curses all it brings.
Our age is tigers sweet of eye and limb.

So for this shipwreck think a falling sun
painting a foundered city and a dome.
Rome from its seventh hill a shipwreck seems,
the shipwreck in that sea is sweet to me.
The tide of stars must bury grief and greed,
the moon bleach the still floating figurehead.

Ernest M. Frost.

A MARRIAGE OF FOUNTAINS

The fountains' joining flourish of wet hair
Had swollen only to a pensive head,
As Venus eased the seas' sole maidenhead;
So, fluid dancer, floriating there,
Her tangent limbs veined with the neighbour air,
Her fluted shoulders negligently spread
Along the fountain-contour where it bled
In frosts of skin as candid as a flare;

Now, water sensualised, she might defy,
Half-hesitant, the theorem of the eye;
The fountain pulsed under her weightless foot;
The heart within, as it began to beat,
Seduced from green the callow yards of wheat,
And stung the lurking quinces into fruit.

Iain Fletcher.

OUR GUESTS

Dannie Abse: Born in South Wales. Has had poems and stories published in various periodicals and anthologies. Edits the new magazine *Verse.*

Robin Atthill: Born 1912. Stowe and Trinity College, Oxford. Schoolmaster. Started writing poetry in 1940 since when his poems have been published in *Poetry Quarterly, Outposts, Wind & the Rain, New English Weekly, Tribune, Penguin New Writing.*

Ian Bancroft: Born 1922 on the borders of the Lake District. Balliol College, Oxford. Contributed to *The Crown and the Sickle.*

Leonard Clark: Inspector of Schools. Author of *Poems; Passage to the Pole; Rhandanim; The Kingdom of the Mind; Alfred Williams, Life and Work.*

Alex Comfort: published several volumes of poetry, short stories, and two novels.

Paul Dehn: Born 1912 Manchester. Educated Shrewsbury and Brasenose College, Oxford, where he edited the *Cherwell.* Poems in various magazines. Film and dramatic critic, colmnist, and script-writer for the B.B.C.

Patric Dickinson: edited the *Time for Verse* programme for the B.B.C.

Iain Fletcher: Born 1920. Dulwich College & London University. Published *A Passion Play* (1943). Poems in various magazines and anthologies.

Ernest M. Frost: 1918. Contributor to *Horizon, Poetry Quarterly, Outposts.*

Wrey Gardiner: Editor of *Poetry Quarterly.* Several volumes of poetry and *The Dark Thorn* (autobiography). Director of Grey Walls Press.

Kenneth Gee: 1908. Poems in *Horizon, Poetry London, Poetry Scotland, Outposts, Poetry Quarterly, Poetry Folios,* etc. One volume of poems and a collection of short stories.

Muriel Grainger: Journalist, living in London. Poems in *Adelphi, Poetry Quarterly, Outposts, Poetry Review.*

John Heath-Stubbs: work been published in most of the leading journals and magazines. Two volumes of poetry.

Dallas Kenmare: Several volumes of poetry: *The Philosophy of Love; Browning and Modern Thought; The Long Pursuit* (essays); *The Face of Truth.*

James Kirkup: South Shields. Kings College, Newcastle. Contributor to most literary and poetry publications, chiefly poetry, reviews, articles, and translations of French and German poetry. One book, *The Drowned Sailor.*

Denise Levertoff: Contributor to *Poetry Quarterly, Outposts* and *New Road.* One book of poems.

Hugo Manning: Born in England. Lectured at South American Institutes for propagation of English and North American culture. Contributor to North & South American newspapers and anthologies. Reviews, stories, poems, etc. have appeared in many English publications. Had a play produced. Main work, so far, in journalism abroad.

Lionel Monteith: writes criticism, reviews and poetry. Has contributed to English and American journals, including *Outposts, Poetry Quarterly, The Gate,* and *Variegation*. Founded the magazine *Poetry Commonwealth*. Co-editing with Howard Sergeant a collection of imaginative stories, *Stories in Transition*.

Kenneth Muir: Poet, critic and lecturer. His work has appeared in *Penguin New Writing* and other periodicals.

Francis Newbold: Born 1913. Educated at Burton-on-Trent Grammar School. Poems published in *Argosy, New English Weekly, Outposts,* and .....*Bugle Blast*. Was represented in B.B.C. *Northern Voices* programme.

Norman Nicholson: Born 1914 at Millom, Cumberland, where he still lives. Lecturer in literature for W.E.A. Reviews for *John o'London's Weekly, Time & Tide, New English Weekly,* etc. Edited *Pelican* Anthology of Religious Verse. Publications: *Man and Literature* (criticism); *Five Rivers* (poetry); *The Fire of the Lord* (fiction).

T. W. Ramsey: Dulwich College and London University. Was for some years a schoolmaster and is now director of a firm of metal and wire-workers. Published four volumes of poetry. Member of the P.E.N.; Chairman of the Council of the Poetry Society; elected Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, 1947.

Howard Sergeant: Founder/editor of *Outposts*. Co-edited *The Gate*. Founded with Lionel Monteith the *Commonwealth Literary Clearing House*. Author of *The Leavening Air*. Edited the following anthologies: *For Those Who Are Alive, Anthology of Contemporary Northern Poetry, Cross Section, Poetry in Transition,* and the *Northern Voices* programme for the B.B.C.

Muriel Spark: Born Edinburgh and spent some years in South Africa. Left *Argentor* to edit *Poetry Review*. Secretary of the Poetry Society.

Derek Stanford: Poet and critic. His work has appeared in many literary journals during the last few years. One book (with John Bayliss) *Romantic Miscellany*. A book of essays on the younger poets, *The Freedom of Poetry,* in the press.

Henry Treece: Born 1912. Four volumes of poetry. Edited *Transformation, Poems from the Air Force, New Apocalypse, White Horseman, The Crown and the Sickle*.

Vernon Watkins: Three volumes of poetry. His work included in most of the modern anthologies. Contributes regularly to *The Listener*.

IN MEMORIAM

With the death of Duncan Campbell Scott in Ottawa last December, Canada mourns the loss of its senior man of letters. Friend and contemporary of Lampman and Roberts, Dr. Scott was still an active and admired writer to the day of his death; our issue of last September carried reviews in praise of a recent book of his verse and of his edition of Lampman. He was one of the earliest contributors to this magazine and, as late as last March, we were privileged to give first publication to his lyric, "The Rite." Canadian letters has lost one of its most distinguished artists and most loved personalities.

BOOK REVIEWS

OTHER CANADIANS: *An Anthology of the New Poetry in Canada 1940-1946*, edited by John Sutherland; First Statement Press, 4432 St. Denis St., Montreal, Que., 112 pages, $1.75.

The introduction to this anthology, by Mr. Sutherland, is a disturbing performance, by one who has already achieved a *locus classicus* of bitterness and bad taste in a recent attack on the last award of the Governor-General's medal for poetry. With Mr. Sutherland's fundamental contention this is not the place to take issue, except to disagree with the view of Canadian poetry that belittles what has been done in the British tradition of writing and sees hope only in the exponents of a "tough" Americanism. The disturbing fact is that Mr. Sutherland conveys all this in a tone that reminds the reader of nothing so much as of the autobiographical commissar: "Once I was a little boy in the village, with long golden hair. Now I hate everybody!"

It is not surprising to find Mr. Sutherland going out of his way to commend such poetry as this:

> But the biggest trouble is the worms
> Don't know the score, they never had their radios tuned in
> When the pot-belly guys were shooting the s. . . to the wide wide world,
> The sweet little lowdown on life, liberty, and the pursuit of virgins.
> So the little crawlers don't know a thing, they get hungry and anything they see
> They eat because they can't stand starving to death, strange as it seems,
> And all those bodies lying there going nowhere fast
> Look mighty good to the little devils . . .

Without objecting to either the sentiment or the language for their own sake, one cannot resist the conclusion that a piece such as this is prematurely brought to birth. The greatest poets of the past were able to express grief and horror, bitterness, anger and furious hatred; but their rhythms were compelling, their images infinitely terrible; compassion and indignation contended in their verses; they achieved terror rather than horror. The "gentle" Shakespeare gave us *Hamlet* and *Lear*. "Sweetness and light" was the aim of our most violent satirist. The ideal relation of poet and critic was long ago indicated:

> That you with music, I with light
> Might beautify and cheer the night. . .
> That brother should not war with brother,
> And worry and devour each other;
> But sing and shine by sweet consent,
> Till life's poor transient night is spent. . .

If examples are wanted nearer at hand of a bitterness which is salutary and an iconoclasm which can be constructive, we have Patrick Anderson's "A Poet and Painting" in *Canadian Art* of last May. And, on a larger canvas, the poets and critics of John Lehmann's *Penguin New Writing* do as a general thing achieve in spite of the exasperations of war and austerity, a tone of amenity, a creative human warmth mingled with the whiteness of their critical light.

The poems in this collection come as a delight and something of a surprise. So much is good and in so many ways. From nearly a score of contributors it is hard to select. But Patrick Anderson takes the lead for other than alphabetic reasons: he has the gift of imagery, which cannot be faked; and his rhythms and diction give adequate support; a line is sufficient to illustrate:

the iron kindness of the Russian coasts.

More tense than his is the verse of P. K. Page; thinner and more feminine; giving the effect of tentativeness and enticing the reader:

Kneeling in welters of narcissus his
dry creaking joints bend with a dancer's ease.

It is not an alphabetic accident, either, that brings Miriam Waddington and James Wreford together. They share a gentleness and a grace of movement that are all the more attractive in this age of violence and angular economics. Mrs. Waddington's "Lullaby" shows once more that softness need not be sentimental. Mr. Wreford can see clearly and think hard, but always to leave

the air fresher
after the storm—make of the rain our flowers
grass, green, and a new start over again . . .

Special attention is attracted by Mr. Dudek, whose simplicity of expression and strength of emotion lead to unequal effects, the best of which are beautifully pure and intense. Mr. Souster, whom for reasons of youth and vigour the mind associates with Mr. Dudek, is difficult to criticize: so much remains potential; so many of the poems seem never to have got beyond their first draft.

As one lays this anthology down, a question rises of general and increasing interest, a question recently discussed in "The Case for Clarity in Poetry" by Albert Ralph Korn and in L. A. MacKay's fine *Queen's Quarterly* article, "On not Understanding the Poets" (Vol. LIV, No. 3). It is undeniable that most contemporary poets make Browning sound like a clearly articulating child. Even those of us who once gave our days and nights to Eliot and have done task-work since on Auden, Thomas and Randall Jarrell, are often baffled by what seems deliberate and unnecessary obfuscation. Could we beg of our friends, even as they throw down the triumphant pen, to retrieve it and add a few notes, a hint of intentions; to revise in the interests of clarity and to be sure at last that in rhythm or in imagery or in echoing diction, if not in rational statement, they have done their best before publishing to achieve communication, to let us know what they mean?

ROY DANIELLS.

PRATT, E. J.: *Behind the Log*; Toronto, Macmillan, 1947; 47 pp.; $2.00

Certain critics have offered disparaging comments on Pratt's writing as pedestrian in its realism, and as seeking compensation for an inner uncertainty by virility of diction and "gigantism" of imagery. When not merey irritated by established reputation, such critics are probably rejecting in the name of "modern" or of "pure" poetry all but (a) the poem of delicate nuance, oblique reference, and experimental form, or (b) the poem of unalloyed "social consciousness." They ignore the gift for evocative imagery in a poem like "Sea Gulls", the range of social satire

from "The Convict Holocaust" to "The Parable of Puffsky," the skilled handling of the long line and of the tone values of words in "Brebeuf." They also by inference seem to reject an important body of writing in Engish, a tradition in which Pratt occupies an honoured place as a narrative poet.

In an age when the heroic and the epic have been largely taken over by the novel, there exhibiting often the imaginative and emotional qualities essential to poetry, Pratt is one of the few who continue the verse form for these themes and moods. *Behind the Log* reveals the vigorous diction and movement, the authentic marine detail, the suspense and action, the gusty humour and grim tragedy, the presence of the sea as a living dramatic force, in a manner reminiscent of *The Roosevelt and the Antinoe* and characteristic of Pratt's best narrative vein. It reveals too an ironic vision and a tragic pity, when a torpedoed freighter suggests "the constituents of our daily bread . . . transubstantiated into death," and when men, struggling in an oil-slicked wave, "died oil-anointed as it choked the 'Christ!'." Here are the heightening and the insight, at least for all those who can read narrative verse as poetry, whether it be that of Chaucer, of William Morris, or of "Ned" Pratt.

W. R.

HIEBERT, P. G.: *Sarah Binks;* Toronto, Oxford Univ. Press, 1947; 182 pp.; $2.50.

It has remained for a professor of chemistry in the University of Manitoba to write the first funny book about Canadian poetry and to supply a local habitation and a name for that protean nymph, the Bad Canadian Poetess.

As Dr. Hiebert tells it, the life story of his imagined Sarah Binks, W.P.M. (Wheat Pool Medal), L.L.D. (post-humously awarded by St. Midget's College), the Sweet Songstress of Saskatchewan and the Poet's Poetess, is probably the most amusing prolonged satire in Canadian literature. It is also a satire *on* Canadian literture, on our tendency to find literary swans in every village goose.

In a style that carefully parodies the pedantries of academic criticism, Dr. Hiebert traces the career of the simple country girl from Willows, Saskatchewan, who, "unschooled and unspoiled, . .. captured in her net of poesy the flatness of that great province." She first rises to fame through tender verses in *The Horsebreeder's Gazette* and *Swine & Kine* (examples are quoted and lovingly analyzed). Later, her art is intellectually enriched by contact with an old geology textbook belonging to Wm. Greenglow, the local school teacher (Failed B.A.) —"he had the educator's peculiar genius for imparting knowledge without himself assimilating it"— and given emotional depth through contact with Henry Welkin, the binder salesman with whom she made her one and only excursion from Willows. With him she spent a vaguely documented two weeks amid the glitter and allure of the Athens of Saskatchewan—Regina. When Henry fades ambiguously from the scene, Sarah returns to her native alkali and goes through her "Dark Hour."

But she recovers to sing gaily once more of the Spring, as in her beautiful "Spreading Time", or with fortitude of the winter:

Beyond the dripping nose and tear,
Beyond the chillblain and the bite,
Beyond the scratchy underwere,
Beyond the eighty-below at night,
There still must lie—though drifts conceal—
Some hidden good for man's descry,
Some secret bounty for his weal,
Which man should shovel out—or try.

We should have thousands more of such gems if Sarah had not accidentally bitten into a horse thermometer and swallowed a full tablespoonful of mercury. It is a good example of Sarah's style, however—that is, of her creator's finesse in building and toppling rhythms and rhymes and meaning to produce something uncannily like the verse which is written in all seriousness by scores of aspiring bards every year in this bardic country of ours.

The hundred or more ditties of this kind which Dr. Hiebert has sprinkled through his "biography" probably constitute a larger body of metrical burlesque than can be found in all the rest of Canadian literature. These and the whole book are recommended reading for anyone with a sense of humor, and required reading for all English professors, reviewers, and members of the Canadian Authors Association.

E. B.

FROST, ROBERT: *A Masque of Mercy;* New York, Henry Holt (Toronto, Oxford University Press), 1947; 39 pp.; $3.00.

In this second "New England Biblical," Mr. Frost examines the contradiction between divine justice and divine mercy, and leaves the mystery as impenetrable as it ever was. In the course of the masque, however, he manages to satirize with characteristic good humor many aspects of modern life which he dislikes—especially the civilization of big cities, bohemianism, Unitarianism, and all kinds of pseudo-sophistication. His handling of the blank verse form is, as usual, superb. H. R.

HARRINGTON, MICHAEL: *The Sea is our Doorway;* Toronto, Ryerson Poetry Chapbook No. 124, 1947; 8 pp., 50c.

Michael Harrington's most obvious qualities as a poet are his intense feeling, his use of vigorous words and his original imagery. Newfoundland and the sea which so profoundly affects its people have called forth most of his poetry. He is full of protest against the brutality of the sea and of the war, and he expresses his protests in restless, wrathful lines, full of contrasting sound patterns. The occasional weaknesses in words and lines do not prevent the reader from sensing that Harrington writes earnestly and well of what he knows best.

C. W. M.

WESTON MCDANIEL: *Look To The Sun;* New York, The Beechhurst Press, 1947, 63 pp.

McDaniel, a Virginian, "a symbol of the New South," as the jacket tells us, has something to say that should be read. Something about intolerance; the injustice of one man to his coloured neighbour. He succeeds, but falls just short enough of moving us, for one to wish that there was something more—something stronger. Anger, yes, at the thoughts the poet wishes us to be angry about and also anger at the poet for not being stronger in his own anger. H. H.

YOUNG, ANDREW: *The Green Man;* London, Cape (Toronto, Clarke, Irwin) 1947; 46 pp.; 90c.

Nature poetry presented in the simple beat of hammered rhyme. The rhythm is rendered stiff by the wedged caesura. "His lines were terse" ends the final verse, in the form of a valedictory. One or two images arrest the eye, not "boiling snow," but leaves that

" . . on the water lie
Making a sunset of the fishes' sky."

R. C. C.

FRAME, MARGARET FULTON: *Phantom Caravan;* Ottawa, Tower Books, 1947; 48 pp.

Miss Frame's offering of verse can hardly be called a "harbinger of a coming Renaissance of Canadian poetry" as suggested in the Foreword; few selections are truly Canadian in either subject matter or imagery. For the most part, the volume is a potpourri of laudable sentiments, mainly autobiographical. Although occasionally fanciful, the imagery is too often weakened by dependence on time-worn diction and diffuse phraseology. The versification is carefully contrived, but generally gives the impression of carrying the thoughts along pig-a-back.

And how could Scent of Roses ever fill
A Tavern where perforce must reek a Still?

This volume will, however, appeal to those readers who seek poetic transportation in a caravan of old and fond acquaintance.

B. K.

JAMESON, VERE (pseud.): *The Sultan of Jobat;* privately printed, 1947; 50 pp.

The author of a Ryerson chapbook, *Moths after Midnight*, (a surgeon who conceals his literary identity under the pseudonym of Vere Jameson) now offers a book of light verses on various subjects. The verse is skillful, the tone genial, but the humour generally rather obvious. In one piece, "Sunday Morning," there is genuine satire, wistful rather than harsh, but all the more effective for the lightness of touch. E. B.

HEDGES, DORIS: *Crisis*, Toronto, Ryerson Poetry Chapbook No. 125, 1947; 16 pp.; 75c.

Doris Hedges writes mainly of the world's hates, fears, wars and frustrations. Although she is deeply affected by the evil that she sees, she does not succeed in convincing us that her thinking on social questions is either clear or profound. She discusses best the miracle of love. The poetry has some variety and vigour, and the style is at times courageous; but too frequently the work lacks preciseness, freshness and originality.

C. W. M.

MacInnes, Tom: *In the Old of My Age;* Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1947; 55 pp.; $1.50.

It is unfortunate that Mr. MacInnes, one of the best of Canada's older poets, has seen fit to publish these verses written since 1935. Almost continuously flat in tone, too frequently banal in expression, and often unbelievably infelicitous in diction, they cannot be saved by the author's obvious good intentions. Out of a total of seventy-six poems, in only three, the ballad-like "What Answer?", the haunting "Mother in Blue," and the romantic "Twilight Lagoon," is there a hint of the lyricism characteristic of the best of MacInnes' poetry. The well-turned phrase like "Rosejar rememberings" is almost totally absent. *In the Old of My Age* only detracts from a well-deserved and long-established reputation.

H. R.

Cormack, Barbara Villy: *Ruth (a Tale of New Beginnings);* privately published; 23 pp.

In twenty-five short episodes, this poem endeavors to present the problems and feelings of an English war-bride adapting herself to Canadian farm-life. Unfortunately, Mrs. Cormack tries to cope with a quantity of material sufficient for a short novel; as a result most of the episodes seem inadequately developed and rather loosely assembled. Attempts to concentrate the material too often produce an erratic fusion of action, description and feeling. The main interest, however, is found not in theme and incident, but in the authentic atmosphere of the Canadian farm.

B. K.

NEW REVIEWERS

R.C.C.—R. C. Cragg, Asst. Professor of English, University of B.C.; author of a recent study, Canada and the Economic Settlement.
H.R.—Howard Rigney, Lecturer in English, University of B.C.
B.K.—Burton Kurth, Jr., Lecturer in English, University of B.C.
C.W.M.—Craig Miller, M.A., B. Ed., Lecturer in English, University of B.C.

PERIODICAL REVIEW

Alberta Poetry Year-Book, 1947; 48 pp.; 50c; order from Mrs. R. O. Shaw, 117 MacLean Block, Edmonton. Two prize-winning essays and 56 poems selected from 335 poems and 19 essays submitted in the 18th annual Poetry Contest. Prize-winner in the Lyric class is Robina Monkman. There is interesting work by Genevieve Bartole of Regina and Mary Allan of Banff.

The American Bard, Vol. 10, No. 3, 1947; 56 pp.; 50c ($2 a year). Ed and published by R. W. Sharp, 9141 Cimarron, Los Angeles, 44. About 180 contributors. No payment.

Arena: Quarterly of New Zealand Writing No. 17, Dec. 1947; 30 pp.s 1 shilling; Ed. N. F. Hoggard, P.O. Box 188, Te Arno, Wellington, N.Z. Handset. Verse, stories, criticism. "The magazine's policy is interna-

tional in outlook and we devote limited space to overseas writers. Recommended.

Canadian Review of Music & Art, Vol. 6, Nos. 3 & 4, Dec.-Jan. 48; pp. 50; 35c ($3.00 a year). Ed. L. de B. Corriveau, 66 College St., Toronto.

Articles on the arts, including literature. In the past (and we hope, the future) contemporary Canadian verse has been printed and discussed in both French and English. We are glad to see this magazine back in circulation. Recommended.

Dalhousie Review, Vol. 27, No. 3, Oct. 1947; pp. 261-388; 50c ($2 a year). Ed. J. Burns Martin, Halifax, N.S. Poems by Birney, Gilean Douglas; articles on Carman and on contemporary Australian poetry; numerous poetry reviews. Payment varies. Recommended.

Furiose, Vol. 3, No. 1, Fall 1947; pp. 84; 50c ($2 a year). Ed Reed Whittemore, RFD 1, Madison, Conn. Associate editors include the poet, Howard Nemerov; contributors to this issue include Weldon Kees and Henry Treece. Enterprising (unpublished work of Scott Fitzgerald and new drawings by Picasso); stimulating (poetry by Weldon Kees); and even furious, in a serio-comic vein (see the fights between reviewers and reviewed). Recommended.

Hermes, Vol. 49, No. 1, Oct. 1947; "magazine of the University of Sydney," Australia; pp. 62; price not given. Ed. P. Gerber.

Horizon, Vol. 16, Sept. 1947; pp. 155-225. Ed. Cyril Connelly, 2 Landsdowne Terrace, London W.C.1. Monthly; advertised as $7.50 a year or 65c a copy in Canada, but sells for 90c a copy in Vancouver. Most celebrated of the intellectual literary journals now current in England; founded at beginning of World War II. Very high standard of poetry and critical articles. September issue contains poems by George Barker, Randall Jarrell, and a long review of Shapiro's *Essay on Rime*. Recommended.

The Lantern, Vol. 21, No. 4, 1947; pp. 24; 40c ($1.50 a year). Ed. C. B. McAllister, 62 Montague St., Brooklyn 2, N.Y.

Manitoba Arts Review, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter 1947; pp. 38; 25c. Ed Anthony Enser. Pub. By Senior Arts Council, U. of Manitoba, Winnipeg. Essays, reviews, stories, poems. Winter number contains two fine sonnets by Roy Daniells. Payment only in offprints. Recommended.

The McMaster Muse, Vol. 57, No. 1, Nov. 1947; pp. 30. Ed. M. J. Diakowsky. The poet James Wreford is a consulting editor. This is the undergraduate quarterly of McMaster University. The current issue contains a number of verse-writers, notably Wesley Scott.

Meanjin, Vol. 6, Nos. 1-3, 1947; pp. 211; 2/6 each ($2 a year in Canada). "A magazine of literature, art & discussion pub. quarterly." Ed. C. B. Christensen, University Extension, Univ. of Melbourne, Carlton N. 3, Victoria, Australia. The all-round literary quality of this magazine is superior to anything at present published in Canada. Outlook and standards international. Payment? No information. Also publishes a "Workshop" supplement of "Poetry & Practical Criticism." Recommended.

Montana Poetry Quarterly, Summer 1947; pp. 24; 25c ($1 a year). Ed. Jessie L. Perro, Seeley Lake, Montana.

Northern Review, Vol. 2, No. 1, Oct.-Nov. 1947; pp. 40; 35c ($2 a year). "Published every two months by the First Statement Press at 3575 Dur-

ocher, Apt. 4, Montreal. Mng. Ed.: John Sutherland." This issue includes one short poem each by Dudek and Roskolenko, ten pages of reviews and a six page attack on other Canadian critics of poetry (by the editor). There is also a notice of resignation from the editorial board by Neufville Shaw, Patrick Anderson, A. M. Klein, F. R. Scott, A. J. M. Smith, P. K. Page, and Ralph Gustafson.

La Nouvelle Rèleve, Vol. 6, No. 1, Dec. 1947; pp. 88; 35c ($3 for ten numbers). Ed. Robert Charbonneau & Claude Hurtubise, 60 West St. James, Montreal. Criticism, stories, reviews; a French-language periodical devoted in particular to the culture of French Canada. Recommended.

Poetry, the Australian Quarterly of Verse; Nos. 23-24, Sept. 1947; pp. 53; "40 cents in America." "When expenses have been met all money over goes to the contributors. Its pages are open to any poet writing in English." Ed. Flexmore Hudson, 22 Nash St., Glen Iris, S.E. 6, Melbourne, Australia. This issue contains work of 18 poets, among whom are one American and four British; the best known is Treece. Good quality. Recommended.

Poetry (London), Vol. 3, No. 11, Sept.-Oct. 1947; pp. 73; 3/6. Ed. Tambimuttu, 26 Manchester Sq., London W.1., England. Founded 1938. Handsomest and most celebrated of existing British poetry magazines. Bimonthly. Supports "the tradition of co-axial literature—different types of writing which are all facets of poetic experience. . . We will leave the interpretation and classification to the critic." This issue contains among many fine things poems by Edith Sitwell and Keith Douglas and some colour litographs by Ceri Richards to a manuscript printing of Dylan Thomas' great poem, "The force that through the green fuse drives the flower." Recommended.

Politics & Letters, a Quarterly Survey of Intellectual Background, Vol. 1, No. 1, Summer 1947; pp. 84; 2/6 (10/ a year). Ed. Clifford Collins, etc., 7 Noel St., London W.1, England. "Payment by arrangement." First issue contains no poetry but ample critiques of interest to all writers, e.g. "The Politics of Yeats." Recommended.

Prairie Wings, Vol. 13, No. 4, Nov.-Dec. 1947; pp. 19; 35c ($2 a year). Ed. Grace Brown Putnam, etc., 1781 Pine St., Napa, Calif. Bi-monthly, formerly published in North Dakota. Traditional verse, national range. Prizes.

Saskatchewan Poetry Book, 1947-48; pub. by Sask. Poetry Soc., 2514A-15th Ave., Regina; pp. 39. The twelfth annual anthology of the Society contains the work of 37 writers of verse.

Spirit, Vol. 14, No. 4, Sept. 1947; pp. 91-119; 35c ($2 a year). "A magazine of poetry published bi-monthly at 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16; N.Y., by the Catholic Poetry Society of America, Inc., Editor: J. G. Brunini." Only poems of Society's members are printed but membership is open to all ($2 a year).

Translation (London), First Series, Nov. 1945, pp. 44; 10/6. Eds.: N. Braybrooke & Eliz. King, 15 Newton Court, London W.8, England. "A new and unusual kind of anthology" which aims to publish *poetic* translations of poetry from classical and modern languages, with emphasis on the latter. Among the translaters are Dunsany, H. J. C. Grierson, and Vernon Watkins. Recommended.

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